

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-69: Canceled

70. (currently amended) A method for maintaining previously cooked food portions in a ready to use condition in a food warming apparatus comprising a cabinet having a heated compartment which has an upper compartment surface and a lower compartment surface, said method comprising the steps of:

placing said previously cooked food portions in a tray, said tray having a tray lip defining a tray opening;

inserting a freestanding cover into said heated compartment to define a receiving space for receiving said tray, said cover having a flange section and a support section extending downwardly from said flange section, said support section having a height substantially corresponding to the height of said tray so as to define ~~defining~~ substantially all of said receiving space, at least a portion of said flange section being positioned above said receiving space; and

after inserting said freestanding cover into said heated compartment to define said receiving space, inserting said tray into said receiving space.

71. (original) The method of claim 70, further comprising the step of:

positioning said tray in said receiving space such that said flange section blocks said tray opening to restrict evaporation of liquid from said previously cooked food portions.

72. (original) The method of claim 71, wherein said flange section has a flange surface, and wherein said step of positioning said tray in said receiving space includes the step of positioning said tray lip to be substantially flush with said flange surface.

73. (original) The method of claim 70, wherein said cover defines a front opening providing access to said receiving space, and wherein said step of inserting said tray into said receiving space includes the step of inserting said tray into said receiving space through said front opening.

74. (original) The method of claim 73, wherein said cover defines a rear opening providing access to said receiving space, and wherein said step of inserting said tray into said receiving space includes the step of inserting said tray into said receiving space through said rear opening.

75. (original) The method of claim 73, further comprising the step of removing said tray from said receiving space through said front opening.

76. (original) The method of claim 74, further comprising the step of removing said tray from said receiving space through said rear opening.

77. (canceled)

78. (previously presented) The method of claim 70, further comprising a shelf mounted in said cabinet, wherein said support section includes a supporting edge for supporting said cover on said shelf, and wherein said step of inserting said cover into said compartment includes the step of placing said supporting edge on said shelf.

79. (original) The method of claim 78, wherein said cover has an uppermost cover surface, and wherein said step of inserting said cover into said compartment includes the step of fitting said cover into said compartment so that said uppermost cover surface contacts said upper compartment surface.

80. (original) The method of claim 70, wherein said cover has a front retainer, further comprising the step of said front retainer engaging said shelf.

81. (original) The method of claim 80, wherein said cover has a rear retainer, further comprising the step of said rear retainer engaging said shelf.

82. (original) The method of claim 80, further comprising the step of removing said cover from said compartment.

83. (original) The method of claim 82, further comprising the step of disengaging said front retainer from said shelf.

84. (original) The method of claim 83, wherein said front retainer is defined by a pair of tabs integral to said support section, wherein said step of disengaging said front retainer from said shelf includes the step of flexing a portion of said support section.